

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Nevada Fish & Wildlife Office  
1340 Financial Blvd #234  
Reno, NV 89502  
775-861-6300  
Fax – 861-6301  
<http://www.fws.gov/nevada>

# News Release



**For Immediate Release**  
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**Contact: Jeannie Stafford**  
**(775) 861-6300**

## **Four Nevada Sand Dune Beetles May Warrant Protection Under the Endangered Species Act**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) today announced that four sand dune beetles occurring Nye County, Nevada, may warrant federal protection as a threatened or endangered species following review of a petition from Wild Earth Guardians seeking to protect six Nevada sand dune beetles. The Service found that the petition did not present substantial scientific or commercial information to warrant listing of two of the sand dune beetles included in the petition.

Today's decision, commonly known as a 90-day finding, is based on scientific information about the species provided in the petition requesting listing of the species under the Endangered Species Act (Act). The Service will now undertake a more thorough status review of four sand dune beetles: Crescent Dunes aegialian scarab (*Aegialia crescenta*), large aegialian scarab (*A. magnifica*), Crescent Dunes serican scarab (*Serica ammomenisco*), and Giuliani's dune scarab (*Pseudocotalpa giuliani*) to determine whether to propose adding the species to the federal list of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants. No further action will be taken on the following two sand dune beetles: Hardy's aegialian scarab (*Aegialia hardyi*) and Sand Mountain serican scarab (*Serica psammobunus*).

"The finding does not mean that the Service has decided it is appropriate to list the four Nevada sand dune beetles," said Jill Ralston, acting state supervisor for the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office. "The 90-day finding is the first step in a process that triggers a more thorough review of all the biological information available. We are encouraging the public to submit any relevant information about the sand dune beetles and their habitat to us for consideration in the comprehensive review."

The four sand dune beetles are known to occur only on public lands in Nye County, Nevada, managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Crescent Dunes aegialian scarab and Crescent Dunes serican scarab occur at Crescent Dunes, designated as an off-road vehicle recreation area. The large aegialian scarab and Giuliani's dune scarab occur at Big Dune and the nearby Lava Dune. Big Dune is a designated off-road vehicle recreation area; however, a small portion has been designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to protect the habitat of the two petitioned sand dune beetles and other endemic fauna. A small portion of the ACEC is closed to motorized recreation.

To ensure this status review is comprehensive, the Service is soliciting information from state and federal natural resource agencies and all interested parties regarding the four Nevada sand dune beetles and their habitat.

Based on the status review, the Service will make one of three possible determinations:

- 1) Listing is not warranted, in which case no further action will be taken.
- 2) Listing as threatened or endangered is warranted. In this case, the Service will publish a proposal to list, solicit independent scientific peer review of the proposal, seek input from the public, and consider the input before a final decision about listing the species is made. In general, there is a one-year period between the time a species is proposed and the final decision.
- 3) Listing is warranted but precluded by other, higher priority activities. This means the species is added to the federal list of candidate species, and the proposal to list is deferred while the Service works on listing proposals for other species that are at greater risk. A warranted but precluded finding requires subsequent annual reviews of the finding until such time as either a listing proposal is published, or a not warranted finding is made based on new information.

Anyone wishing to submit information regarding the sand dune beetles may do so by one of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- U.S. mail or hand-delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: *Docket No. FWS-R8-ES-2011-0041*; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203.

We will post all comments on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us. Comments must be received by October 3, 2011.

For further information about the sand dune beetles and this finding contact: Jill Ralston, Acting State Supervisor, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office by mail at 1340 Financial Blvd., Suite 234, Reno, NV, 89502; by telephone (775-861-6300); or by facsimile (775-861-6301). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 800-877-8339, or visit the Service's web site at <http://www.fws.gov/nevada>

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